

## The Polish Sailplane "KOMAR BIS"

The "Komar Bis", recently acquired by the Falcon Glider Club of Pittsburgh, is the evolution of the popular "Komar", built in 1932 by A. Kocjan as an intermediate sailplane for competition and training. The excellent control and aerodynamic design of the "Komar Bis" are said to make it an ideal ship for thermal soaring. It is built under license in Esthonia, Finland, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Palestine.

The wing has a single spar with an auxiliary spar in the rear. It is fixed to the fuselage by three bolts, which make assembly easy. The struts are on steel tubes of streamline section. The differential aileron control system is mounted on ball bearings. The hexagonal fuselage is covered with plywood and has a roomy and comfortable pilot's cockpit.

Records obtained with the "Komar Bis" include: the former Polish endurance record of 22 hours, 15 minutes and the Polish night record of 11 hours, 15 minutes. A "Komar" built in Yugoslavia placed second in the soaring contest held in Switzerland in 1935.



The Polish Sailplane "Komar Bis" *Phot. J. Ryan*

### SPECIFICATIONS

Span	.....15.82 m. (52.2 ft.)
Length	.....6.75 m. (22.3 ft.)
Weight empty	.....130 kgs. (325 lb.)
Wing area	.....17.4 m <sup>2</sup> (187 sq. ft. (or ft. <sup>2</sup> ))
Wing loading	.....12.2 kg/m <sup>2</sup> (2.8 lb./sq. ft.)
Safety factor	.....10.5
Stalling speed	.....37 km/h (24 m.p.h.)
Minimum sinking speed	0.66 m./sec. (2.2 ft./sec.)

## What'll We Do In '39

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winches and tow cars. The plans for a large 1939 contest anticipate the help and cooperation of regional units in handling these problems.

We finally come to a consideration of how we might organize a contest which will accommodate all the American and foreign pilots who want to attend, and, at the same time, treat each one fairly as to launchings and spread of prize money.

Let's assume that there is \$10,000 in prize money: \$5,000 in a point award fund and \$5,000 in some 150 first, second and third bonus prizes ranging from \$10 to \$500, 60 odd being for goal flights. Let's assume also that Cleveland Hyde, with his Cadet (to name a "C" pilot of several years' standing, who enjoys soaring but who has a low performance glider), can figure on making part of his expense money by winning a reasonable share of the prize total because the minimum requirements for his points are low enough for him to exceed. He would not have to compete against Chet Decker or Emil Lehecka, Silver C pilots, who have high performance sailplanes. In order to earn their points, the latter would have to exceed different minimum requirements.

Could a contest of this sort—really two separate contests, held at the same place and time—be run efficiently and to the satisfaction of all concerned? If a substantial amount of prize money was made available, and each pilot who turned in performances that were good for that particular combination of skill, experience and glider, could figure on getting a fair share of the winnings, how many pilots and gliders would participate in the contest?

Should the Contest Board, under these conditions, anticipate 250 pilots and 100 gliders? There probably wouldn't be that many of either, though a program could be worked out to handle the situation. The following might be considered. Put all contestants into one of two groups. In group I put the Silver C pilots, who

would have the same minimum requirements as in 1938, and let them take off from Harris Hill first each day. In group II would be put all other pilots, with minimum requirements of 1 hour, 1000 feet and 5 miles. They would be launched after the Silver C's and, if the group were too large to handle from Harris Hill, some could be winch launched from the airport and the rest from the foot of South Mountain, rotating each day with the Harris Hill group. The plan would provide continuous activity every day on Harris Hill. On days when the utilities couldn't soar, the point system could be applied to gliding events—longest glides to the valley, with spot landings on the official field, airport contests, etc. There certainly would be plenty of activity, and it would keep everybody happy.

We should feel that the time has arrived to show the strength of the soaring movement in the United States. If we can concentrate all the Federally certificated gliders and all the glider pilots in the United States at Elmira for next year's contest, we can make such an impressive showing that real national recognition will be inevitable. And if we then propose a practical program for the further development of soaring in the United States, to the proper authorities, we will stand a better chance than ever before of getting some action.

It can be done. If we can agree on the kind of affair we want and then all pitch in and cooperate to make the 10th Annual National Soaring Contest the best one we have yet had, from everyone's point of view, with our minds made up to have fun doing it, there is no question but what we'll see results.

The opportunity to make this contest—the decennial of organized soaring in the United States—something more than just an annual meet, is a challenge not only to the Contest Board but to the whole soaring movement and the parties cooperating. Let's get behind this idea and let's remember to have fun seeing it through.

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P.S.—Reactions to this proposal will be greatly appreciated by your Contest Board Chairman. Mail them to SSA headquarters.